

Archive of Unrealized Projects

18 May 2011

Dear AUP:

I hope you will consider including 'Repo Jet' in your Archive of Unrealized Projects. Although I currently lack (and am seeking) the resources to complete it, the project is within the realms of realization. Nevertheless, it resonates with the spirit of your archive, as its intentions are to record and archive the visions and dreams of Americans from impoverished and disconnected regions of the United States. It is earnest, ironic, hopeful and apathetic all at once. The project taps into potentiality and desire—driving forces of change.

BIO

I work at the intersection of performance, video, sculpture and participatory actions to initiate dialogue about politics and culture. I engage in a rigorous, research-based approach to transform complex information into emotional encounters that orchestrate social tensions. Rather than visualizing the unseen, I employ spatial aesthetics to make imperceptible forces a consciously embodied experience. I stage conflict between desire and discomfort through intimate, choreographed encounters between the public and sculptural media—provoking multivalent readings and visceral responses. My video and installation works 'Transfers' make anxiety and bodily boundaries visceral and spatial; addressing fundamental biopolitics through acts of pleasure and contagion. Speaking to the earnest dreams and empty excess of American politics is at the heart of 'Marshmallow Crash' and 'Marshmallow Suicide'— video performances of violent and indulgent encounters set against a bucolic landscape. Symbolically charged materials—milk, marshmallows, viruses, bodily organs—are put into tension with humor and disgust in my work. A conceptual methodology and threads of curiosities integrate my practice. Food, fluids, animals, biopolitics, social relations, pathetic gestures, civic agency—all are recurring ideas and materials in my practice. Through them I am searching how we become unsettled, and if states of anxiety can be creative.

REPO JET (SHORT DESCRIPTION)

'Repo Jet' hails from dispossessed economies, American excess and displacement. It is a small, personal airplane repurposed as an off-grid, mobile apartment and site to collect visions for the future. Designed for flight yet always grounded, it will be pulled by a small fleet of bicycles, traveling across the United States to record people's dreams and provide spectacle where ghost towns and tent cities stand amidst legendary wilderness and speculation. As functional sculpture, it will serve as a model for propositional architectures and emerging technologies. 'Repo Jet' reuses symbolic objects, structures and metaphors to form absurd amalgams set against the American landscape and social tensions. The personal jet is transformed into a migrant space, laboriously slow-moving rather than a luxury escape vehicle. 'Repo Jet' is not another temporary utopia or simplistic micro-solution to structural failure. Instead, through spectacular sculpture, performance and unstructured listening, it carves out a space for wild imagination.

REPO JET (LONG DESCRIPTION)

'Repo Jet' hails from dispossessed economies, American excess and displacement. Since the market crash, we have seen

foreclosures ghost whole towns and neighborhoods; banks order Mafioso-style chase scenes to repossess luxury jets; and mushrooming poverty changing the American landscape. In moments of economic and environmental crisis, how can we re-articulate the spirit of Manifest Destiny? Can we envision the future without speculating into utopias? 'Repo Jet' is a proposition—seriously absurd in accordance with the times. I will purchase an inoperative personal jet and alter its function—private, fuel-based flight—into a small space for shelter and visionary dreaming. Where possible, we will use salvaged materials and innovative technologies to outfit the jet as a mobile apartment equipped with solar and kinetic electricity generators. We will install a system to pull the jet by a small fleet of human-powered bicycles.

'Repo Jet' will be a moving spectacle as it journeys across the States, stopping to host workshops, barbecues, dream-recording and storytelling about personal relationships to capitalism, romantic adventuring and American futures. The interior will be upholstered white, squishy and marshmallow-like. People will be invited inside to share and record their visionary dreams for the future. I will create photocollages inspired by their stories, and compile them into a book with dreams and photographs from the journey.

Trajectory:

- Research & Development in conversation with Building Center No. 3 Architecture Firm
- Visualizations & model-making
- Collaborative design production with University team
- Launch
- I-2 month cross-country museum tour
- Stops in small towns along the way
- Visionary dreams recorded, barbecues
- Finale on West Coast
- Material compiled into a book

'Repo Jet' will form temporary publics and connections through advance contact with museums, public libraries, gas stations, restaurants, and schools—as well as roadside improvisation. It will be a site for propositional, collaborative design. As such, it will instigate creative discussion wherever it journeys. Traveling from one cultural institution to another, it will stop in towns rarely frequented by contemporary art. 'Repo Jet' is a mobile vision for truckers and rural geographies as much as it is for self-selecting cultural audiences.

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Above all, I wish to creatively acknowledge the wreckage of neoliberalism in America over the past 40 years. The gap between the rich and the poor has reached an extreme greater than what precipitated the Great Depression. I wish to connect metropolises to interstitial landscapes through a journey, allowing both disillusionment and grandeur to share space at the same time. I want to give room to reckless dreaming as a social power. Whether viable or utterly impractical, unleashing the force of dreams into the social sphere is the artistic goal of 'Repo Jet.'

Sincerely,
Caitlin Berrigan

b. 1981 California USA**education**

- 2009** Master's of Science, Visual Studies, School of Architecture & Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
2004 B.A. Art History & Art Production, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA
2003 Brown University Paris, France, Exchange at Vincennes-St. Denis Paris VIII

residencies

- 2011** The Wassaic Project, NY
2010 Vermont Studio Center, Clowes Fellowship
2009 PROGRAM for Art & Architecture, Berlin, Germany, MISTI Fellowship
2008 Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture, Agnest Gund Fellowship
2007 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Center for Biotechnology & Bioart
2005 Experimental Television Center, NY
 Talent Campus, 55th annual Berlinale International Film Festival, Berlin, Germany

selected exhibitions & events

e - exhibition | *s* - screening | *p* - performance | *w* - event/workshop

- 2010**
e 0047, Oslo, Norway, "They go round and round," group exhibition curated by Carson Chan
e s LACMA, Los Angeles, "L.A. Freewaves 20th Anniversary," DVD launch & exhibition, curated by Anne Bray
e Grim Museum, Berlin, Germany, group exhibition curated by Ina Helen Otzko
e Maribel Lopez Gallery, Berlin, Germany, "Avalanche," group exhibition
e Institute of Contemporary Art, Maine College of Art, Portland, ME, "Exchange," curated by Lauren Fensterstock
e Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Olympics, Vancouver, BC, "Culture Shock: Video Interventions," curated by Vancouver Art Gallery
s LUGAR a DUDAS, Festival Internacional de Cine de Cali, Bogotá, Colombia, curated by Luis Ospina
p Experience Economics, Cambridge, MA, "Spectrum of Inevitable Violence," curated by Gavin Kroeber & Rebecca Uchill
- 2009**
e Mills Gallery, Boston, MA, "And Things of That Nature," curated by José Luis Blondet
e p Program Gallery, Berlin, Germany, "Herring Under a Fur Coat," curated by Carson Chan
p Scheltema Complex, Leiden, Netherlands, "And the Cow Jumps Over the Moon," collaboration with Boo Chapple
w Center for Advanced Visual Studies, MIT, Cambridge, MA, "Speaking to the Inside," Waves & Signs Conference
- 2008**
w Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, Initial Public Offerings, talk & commissioned edition
e p Gallery 400, Chicago, IL, "Biological Agents," with Natalie Jeremijenko & Brandon Ballengée
e PS122 Gallery, New York, NY & Sea & Space Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, "The Audacity of Desperation," curated by Steven Lam
e p Jamaica Arts Center, "Metro Poles: Art in Action," collaboration with Tattfoo Tan & Emcee C.M. Master of None, Jamaica, NY
- 2007**
e Storefront for Art & Architecture, New York, NY, "Lost and Found City," curated by Bard Curatorial Studies
e p SIGGRAPH, San Diego, CA, Curated Art Gallery
e Dumbo Arts Center, Brooklyn, NY, Art Under the Bridge Festival
e National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C., 20th Anniversary Festival of Media Arts
e Bent Festival, Eyebeam Gallery, New York, NY
s Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego Women's Film Festival, San Diego, CA
- 2006**
s Hammer Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, 10th Biennial L.A. Freewaves Festival
p Conflux Festival for Psychogeography, Brooklyn, NY, curated by Christina Ray
e William Paterson University Gallery, Wayne, NJ, "More Than Meets the Eye," curated by Sandra DeSando
- 2005**
s Anthology Film Archives, New York, NY, NewFilmMakers Series
e Stuttgarter Filmwinter 18th annual New Media Festival, Stuttgart, Germany
s Corriente Hipermediática Experimental Latinoamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina, program curated by Anne Bray
e s Women in the Director's Chair 24th Annual Festival, Chicago, IL

grants & awards

- 2010** Clowes Foundation Fellowship
- 2008** Agnes Gund Fellowship, Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture
Schlossman Research Fellowship, M.I.T. Architecture Department
Harold & Arlene Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts, M.I.T. Council for the Arts
M.I.T. Council for the Arts Grants for “Life Cycle of a Common Weed” & “Resonance”
- 2007** Collaborative public artwork commission with Beam Camp, Moultonborough, NH
M.I.T. Council for the Arts Grant for “The Knit Virus”
Tuition Fellowship, MIT Architecture Department
- 2004** Hampshire College & The Foundation for Psycho-Cultural Research grant for “La Specola”
- 1999-2004** Johnson Merit Scholarship for Academic Achievement, Hampshire College

lectures

- 2010** Cologne Media Arts Academy (KHM), “Living Matter,” Cologne, Germany
MIT Media Lab, Upgrade! Artist’s talk, Cambridge, MA
- 2009** PROGRAM, “Unresolved Anxieties & Other Political Tactics,” Berlin, Germany
Guest lecturer & critic invited by David Levine, European College of Liberal Arts, Berlin, Germany
Centre for Interdisciplinary Arts, “Food,” presentation & participatory event with Boo Chapple, Perth, Australia
SymbioticA, University of Western Australia, “Contamination & Incorporation,” Perth, Australia
Guest lecturer invited by Stefan Helmreich, MIT Department of Anthropology, Cambridge, MA
Guest lecturer invited by Caroline Jones, MIT History, Theory & Criticism, Cambridge, MA
- 2008** New Museum & Rhizome, “Media art in the age of cloning, transgenics & genomics,” curated by Régine Debatty
Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, “Improvising Glycoproteins: A case study in artistic virology,” Berlin, Germany
Harvard Medical School, BioArt Seminar, Boston, MA
Guest Lecturer, “How We Became Posthuman,” invited by Christoph Cox, Hampshire College, MA

selected media & press

- 0047 Publications: *And the Seasons: They Go Round & Round*, Carson Chan, et al, 2011 (Exhibitions Catalog)
- Anxious Prop Case 4: *Making Visible*, ed. Luis Berríos-Negrón, 2011 (Catalog)
- Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*: Andrew Yang, “Interdisciplinarity as Critical Inquiry,” March 2011 (Article)
- Kunstskritikk*: Geir Haraldseth, “Immaterial ideas and physical presence,” 27 April 2010 (Review)
- Journal of Cultural Anthropology*: Kirksey & Helmreich, “The Emergence of Multispecies Ethnography,” November 2010 (Article)
- Art 21 Flashpoints*: Catherine Wagley, “Freewaves: Video Between Their Toes,” July 29, 2010 (Review)
- Video on the Loose*: L.A. Freewaves, 2010 (DVD + Book)
- Portland Phoenix*: Annie Larmon, “Interplay: the ICA’s concept-driven show,” February 17, 2010 (Review)
- Younger Than Jesus: The Artist Directory*, to accompany the New Museum “Generational” exhibition, 2009 (Catalogue)
- new design*: Fox-Hill & Bennett, “Design Analytics Explained,” issue 63 (Article)
- Confronting Mortality with Art & Science*, ed. Pollier-Green, Van de Velde, Pollier, 2008 (Catalogue)
- Time Out Chicago*: Amy Shroeder, “Biological Agents,” November 2008 (Review)
- MAKE Magazine*: Douglas Repetto, “Art Work: Life Models,” May 2008 (Feature)
- Condé Nast Portfolio*: Callen Bair, “Liver you might like,” January 23, 24 & 26, 2008 (Online Review)
- Metroland*: Nadine Wasserman, “Our Viruses, Ourselves,” November 8, 2007 (Review)
- Time Out New York*: Nina Christensen, “Common Senses,” September 27, 2007 (Feature)
- Globe and Mail*: Simon Houpt, “A city tour that’s ahead by its nose,” October 1, 2007 (Review)
- Ninth Letter*: Fall 2007 (Featured Artist)
- Gothamist.com*: Hugh Merwin, “Artist Befriends Virus with Chocolates,” April 24, 2007 (Online Feature)
- Artworld Digest* Annual Artist Survey, 2007
- boingboing.net, 2007 (Online Feature)
- We Make Money Not Art, 2007 (Online Feature)
- Glowlab*: Caitlin Berrigan, “The Smelling Committee,” September/October 2006 (Online Feature)
- New York Arts Magazine*: Danielle Jackson, “Cabin Comforts,” September/October 2006 (Review)
- Brooklyn Rail*: William Powhida, “Saviour Scraps,” July/August 2006 (Review)